



## **One Stop Operations/WorkFirst Collaborative Committee Minutes of March 26, 2015 Meeting**

**County of Middlesex- Office of Workforce Development  
550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
WIA Conference Room B — 1:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Baden Almonor, George Brokaw, Leslie Burwell, Sharon Crossland, Ruth Cruz, Janice Fishbein, Patricia Foster, Jennifer Gietka, Sherri Goldberg, Luis Ortega, Regina Riccioni, Miriam Ruiz, Roni Salkin, , Wanda Segarra-Cruz, Timothy Timberlake, Linda Urbach, Tom Zsiga

**Staff:** Kevin Kurdziel, Lori Miranda; Julie Piano, John Ross, Diane Seavers, Helina K. Wisniewski

Julie Piano called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.

### **Review and Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the December 4, 2014 One Stop Operations Committee was presented. John Ross made a motion for the approval of the minutes. Baden Almonor seconded and the minutes was unanimously approved.

### **Funding for Program Year 2014 – Julie Piano**

- The Operations Unit are placing more clients to occupational training programs than what was initially projected to be served per month.
- Workforce Learning Link (WLL)
  - Additional funds were received from the state in December 2014, halfway through the program year. This necessitated the One Stop to programmatically change gears. Additional WLL funds also increased the required level of service from one hundred ninety-nine (199) to two hundred ninety nine (299). Basic Computer Literacy classes are getting organized. Applicants' computer literacy levels will be assessed to determine correct placement of Computer Literacy class. These computer classes will not replace the longer, more intensive computer occupational training programs offered at the different schools. In certain cases this will prepare them to enroll for these classes.
  - Computer literacy in job searching is made part of the curriculum.
  - The WLL will now be able to offer preparation for High School Equivalency (HSE). Initially, the WLL were unable to serve people without a high school

diploma but with the upgraded software, the WLL now can. Due to limitations of time to stay at the WLL, individuals who needs HSE have to be functional at least at a ninth grade level.

- The agency have contracts with both New Brunswick BOE and Perth Amboy BOE who can help these clients with basic skills remediation and to obtain their diploma or HSE.

### **Unemployment Insurance (UI) Update**

- Julie Piano stated that the New Brunswick Unemployment office will be closing as of end of the month (March 2015). This closure will cause hardship for both job seekers and staff. Through meetings in Trenton, it is anticipated that other UI offices will close in New Jersey. There's also a trend of closing UI offices in other states. UI matters are being done electronically.
- The UI rate in NJ in January, 2015 is 6.3% and in February, 2015 is 6.4%.
- Unemployment claimants can continue to use the phones and computers at the two One Stop locations. Middlesex County now only have one UI office – Perth Amboy.
- The closest UI offices are Perth Amboy and Somerville.

### **Literacy/High School Equivalency - Tim Timberlake**

- Year 2014 testing was completed and extended to March 15, 2015.
- Year 2015 exams were received with open responses in changes for math.
- Year 2016 test will be completely upgraded and computer based.
- To date, no drop in the graduation rates from the testers.
- The State extended a contract with NBBOE Testing Center for 5 years.

### **WIOA – New Legislation – Kevin Kurdziel**

- Over the past several months, Work Groups were created to address each of the NJDOL and Workforce Development WIOA components: Governance, Planning, Performance Accountability, One Stop Operations, Career Pathways and Industry Partnerships, Services to Individuals with Disabilities and Services to Youth. Each Work Group will make recommendations to LWD and the SETC on implementation issues.
- The WIOA Summit conference will be on Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Mercer County Community College. All the work groups will be giving their overviews on what they have been working on so far.

- One of the biggest changes is with be the Youth Program where the age limit for the youth changed from ages 16-21 to 16-24.
- There is a big push to regionalize the WIBs. The State is looking to identify a better way of regionalizing for planning purposes and to share resources. This is currently an ongoing process. The first model of regionalizing wasn't widely accepted by most of the WIB Director's. The SETC will come back with options.
- WIOA regulations will be released within a week or so.

### **Work First Update – John Ross**

- The WFNJ report was distributed and YTD column was added to the report. The information that is contained in this report is taken from the monthly reports submitted by WFNJ Vendors and the New Jersey Employment Service.
- The Participation Rate in Middlesex County has been below unsatisfactory for two years. There are separate actions being taken by the One Stop and the MCBOSS in terms of attempting to boost the participation rate.
- Monitoring
  - Middlesex County College was monitored in the month of April. There was one outstanding issue totaling \$17,000 in accrued funds. This was primarily due to the delay in the appointment of staff. The County will take \$10,000-\$11,000 back from the College to pay rent for additional space and purchase additional computers and software. The remainder of the accrued funds will be used by MCC to start a program in late April or early May to address computer illiteracy with the GA population.
  - New Brunswick Adult Learning Center is still ongoing and should be completed within a week.
- Department of Human Services - NJ Division of Family Development has released authorization to begin planning for transportation for the next fiscal year.
- Jean Zwingli (absent) – There is an ongoing effort to increase participation. The MCBOSS has assigned an analyst that is scrutinizing all the print outs on participation and working with case managers in the eligibility units to organize and prioritize their caseloads to maximize participation.

### **Work First New Jersey Middlesex County**

**Nov. 2014 through Feb. 2015**

**Year to Date**

#### **TANF**

|                  |            |            |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| Referrals:       | 898        | 1,875      |
| New Enrollments: | 463        | 1,027      |
| Show Rate:       | 51.6% avg. | 55.9% avg. |
| Total Served:    | 1,100      | 2,621      |
| Placements:      | 79         | 242        |
| Engagement:      | 151        | 370        |
| Reengagement:    | 217        | 493        |
| Total Contacts:  | 1,104      | 2,252      |

**GA/SNAP**

|                  |            |            |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| Referrals:       | 2,269      | 3,668      |
| New Enrollments: | 854        | 1,533      |
| Show Rate        | 37.7% avg. | 41.8% avg. |
| Total Served:    | 2,690      | 5,419      |
| Placements:      | 41         | 138        |

**TANF Participation Rate**

|           |       |          |      |
|-----------|-------|----------|------|
| July '14  | 21.1% | Nov. '14 | 22.2 |
| Aug. '14  | 18.1% | Dec. '14 | 25.4 |
| Sept. '14 | 18.1% | Jan. '15 | 23.5 |
| Oct. '14  | 24.4% | Feb. '15 | 21.9 |

**Open Discussion/Other Business**

- Leslie Burwell – Edison Job Corps will be hosting their first Community Relations Luncheon on Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm located at Edison Job Corps, 500 Plainfield Avenue, Edison, NJ. Flyer was emailed to all members.
- Sherri Goldberg - The Guerrilla Marketing Strategies for Employment Success Series will have six workshops on Thursdays at 1:15 pm on March 26, 2015 thru June 4, 2015 at the MC One Stop in Perth Amboy, NJ presented by Winston C. Trumpet. Flyer was emailed to all members.
- Sherri Goldberg – Civic Justice Corps will have 2 Program Tracks in Educational Program and Vocational Program that will be a four month program Monday through Thursday from 9:30 am – 4:30 pm. Flyer was emailed to all members.
- Kevin Kurdziel - Job Fair on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at Woodbridge Community Center, 600 Main Street, Woodbridge, NJ. There were over 1,000 job seekers attended the job fair. Kevin commended everyone for their hard work. The next job fair will in June, 2015.
- Julie Piano – there were two audits conducted of the New One Stop, one by the federal government on serving Veterans and by the Heldrich Center.
- Julie Piano – Starting July 1, 2015 the youth age will be changed from age 21 to 24.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm.

The next One Stop Operations/WorkFirst Collaborative Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 24, 2015 at 1:30pm

**Information/Handout Distributed to Members****Julie Piano**

- Flyer – Workforce Learning Link – Basic Computer Training
- Flyer – JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute – Career Options Day – April, 29, 2015
- Meeting Dates for 2015

**John Ross**

□ WFNJ November 2014 through February 2015 Report